

Untitled document

By Barbara Tetreault

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BERLIN -- U.S. Congressman Charlie Bass, R-NH, confirmed that the U.S. House yesterday voted to send to a conference committee House and Senate appropriation bills that mandate funding to open the Berlin prison.

The full Senate this week passed the Commerce, Justice Science appropriations bill. The House Appropriations Committee passed its version of the bill earlier this summer. Bass said both bills contain similar language making funding to operate the Berlin prison a priority.

Bass said he supported the request for a conference committee to work out differences in the two bills. He said he will work to ensure the final conference report includes the prioritization language for the three prisons, including Berlin, that are constructed but not activated. The compromise measure would then go back to the two legislative bodies for final approval.

"I'm encouraged that this appropriations bill is moving forward, and I will continue to work with my colleagues and the rest of the New Hampshire congressional delegation to see that the Berlin prison is open and operational as soon as possible. This facility is too important to the economic fabric of the North Country," Bass said.